A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE Metropoliticall Church of YORK, upon the 19. Day of *May*, being the fourth *Sunday after Easter last*,

BY

WILLIAM RANSON, Vicar of Barton upon Humber,

BEFORE

HIS EXCELLENCIE

The *MARQUES* of Newcastle, Lord Generall, &c.

And Published by his speciall Command.

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The Forme of bidding the Prayer prescribed before the Sermon.

THat God may have Honour, and we comfort by his blessing upon the businesse we have now in hand. Let us devoutly call upon his Divine Majesty, humbly beseeching him in the behalf of the whole Congregation of Christian people, farre and wide dispersed over the face of the Earth: that their number may be daily multiplyed, untill all Nations bow their neckes unto the yoke of Christ; and that whersoever they live, they may live in Truth without errour, in Peace without faction, and in the Power of Godlinesse without Hypocrisie. More particularly, let us intreat him for these Churches over which he hath appointed our gracious Soveraigne to stretch the wings of his Royall Protection, as the Cherubims did over the Arke of God: especially for our Holy Mother, the Church of England; That the soundesse of her Faith, and the comelinesse of her Order, may be preserved for ever: and that the eyes of the Lord her God may still watch over her to doe her good, defeating the Designes of all her Adversaries from without, and confounding the Devices of these that rise up among our owne selves, to disturbe her Peace. To this end that he will be graciously pleased to redouble his blessings upon the Principall Stone in this Fabricke; Charles by the Grace of God, King of great Brittaine, France, and Ireland, Defender of the true Faith, over all Persons, and in all Causes, as well Sacred as Civill, within these and all other his Dominions, immediately under Christ Supreme Governour: That his heart may be inclined, and his hands strengthened to build up the ruines, and reunite the rents of the Church of God; that he may be girt with might to doe Justice and Judgement among his People, and to smite through the loynes of all those that rise up against him, that so wee his Subjects under the shadow and shelter of his gracious Government, stretched over us for many yeers, may lead a quiet and a peaceable life in all

Godlineſſe and Honeſty. *Pray we God to bleſſe him in his Royall Conſort* our Gracious Queen Mary, *in his hopefull and Illuſtrious Sonne* Charles the Prince, *and in all the reſt of his Royall Iſſue. And to bleſſe him in all that are in Authority under him, whether they ſerve at the Altar, or ſit at the helme of Civill or Martiall affaires; to powre downe his bleſſings upon the Reverend Clergy, by what names or titles ſoever they be Honoured, whether* Archbiſhops *or* Biſhops, (*Eſpecially*, the moſt Reverend Father in God John, Lord Archbiſhop of this Province, Primate of England, and Metropolitan,) *or whether they be of the inferiour Orders of Prieſts and Deacons. Pray we that all of them may have wiſe hearts, and watchfull eyes, and holy hands, and hearty concord among themſelves, and a due care of that great charge which the Lord hath committed to their ſpeciall truſt, and to inable them to diſcharge this high truſt with more cheerfulneſſe: that hee will be pleaſed to looke downe, and* bleſſe their ſubſtance, and accept the offerings of their hands, and make the Rod of Aaron flouriſh againe with freſh bloſſomes, that this people may ſee it, and ceaſe from their murmurings leſt they die *in this or any other ſinne. Pray we for all Schooles of Literature that ſupply the Church with Labourers fit for ſo choyſe a ſervice; for the two famous Univerſities of this Kingdome,* Cambridge and Oxford, *that they may flouriſh in the knowledge of good Learning and true Religion, and be as two Olive-trees in the houſe of God, which may never faile to feed the lampes with holy Oyle that are to burne in the Candleſticke of his Sanctuary: and as for the Sanctuary and thoſe that ſerve there, ſo let our Prayers aſcend as Incenſe for all that ſerve his Majeſty in the great affaires of the Kingdome, whether they have the Honour to ſerve him at the Board of Counſell, or in the Field of Warre. And eſpecially let us beſeech God to be neere unto him with his gracious aſſiſtance, whoſe affaires have a neerer and more immediate influence upon us here, his Excellencie,* William, Marqueſſe of Newcaſtle, *Lord Generall of his Majeſties Forces in theſe Northerne parts, and many other Counties of this Kingdome; That his hands may be ſtrong, and his deſignes proſperous againſt every enemy which hath lift up his hand againſt the Lords Anointed, or done wickedly in his Sanctuary; and that hee and all that are Commanders under him, in particular, the Vigilant and Worthy Go-*

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vernour of this City, Sir Thomas Glemham, may wade through the throng of their great employments with Wisdome, Courage, Innocence and Honour, and live to see happy dayes, and Peace upon Israel. Pray we in like manner for the Honourable the Lord Maior of this City, for the Aldermen and Sheriffes, and all the loyall Citizens; that God may preserve them, and us with them from the violence of the Wicked; and for his Names sake preserve this great City, and this famous Church, wherein he hath put his Name from the spoyle and profanation of evill doers. Intercede we by our Prayers for all that are any way afflicted, that God may give them beauty in stead of ashes, and comfort them for the dayes wherein they have suffered adversity. For all severall Orders and Degrees amongst us, that they may live together in brotherly affection one toward another, and true Devotion to Gods service: that the Nobility may improve their Honour by employing themselves in Worthy actions, that all who are in Authority under his Majesty may use their Authority to the suppressing of Vice by doing unpartiall Iustice upon Offenders; and that the Commons may temper their Liberty, by yeelding due Obedience to God and their King, and by maintaining Peace and Charity among themselves. Lastly, in all humility recommend we unto the Divine Goodnesse our selves here assembled in his holy Name, that with meek heart and due reverence we may heare and receive his holy Word, beseeching the Father of all mercies to be mercifull unto us in the pardon & forgivenesse of all our sins, and so to assist us in the performance of this duty, that every one of us may indeavour with more alacrity to repent unfainedly of our misdeeds, and to walk worthy of the Gospell of Christ so graciously communicated unto us by his undeserved favour. To conclude, returne we unto the Lord, humble and hearty thanks as for all other his transcendent mercies, so especially for all those that are departed out of this life in the faith of Christ; most earnestly intreating him so to direct our lives after their good example, that, this mortall life ended, we together with them, may through his mercy be made partakers of a joyfull Resurrection unto everlasting life, and numbred with his Saints in everlasting glory. These and all other things needfull for us, let us humbly crave at the hands of God, in the Name and Mediation of his beloved Son, saying with fear and reverence that most perfect Prayer which himselfe hath taught us. Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

Judges 5. 23.

Curse ye Meroz (said the Angell of the Lord) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

IT is a Text extremely vext and abused. Not many passages of Scripture more frequently alledged in the Printed Pamphlets & Seditious Sermons of those that b'ow the bellowes of this unnaturall Rebellion which at this time rageth so sore against us. And I hope we shall performe that worke which the Angel requireth here in the Text, in some sort, *help the Lord*, if we help to vindicate the Text out of their hands.

The words are a part of *Deborah* and *Barak's* Triumphall Song two Poëts that were framed to this divine Faculty, not by dreaming on the top of *Parnassus*, but by fighting at the foot of *Mount Tabor*, the consideration of that great and glorious Victory which God gave them over *Sisera*, did so ravish their thoughts with admiration, that they could not containe themselves, but vented their overflowing affections in these heavenly Raptures which are here recorded by the holy Ghost.

Which Raptures as they serve chiefly for this, to set forth the praises of Almighty God so not onely for this, but also to shew us our duty: For together with the praises of Almighty God, they interweave the praises of these Heroicall Spirits, whom God stirred up to be his instruments in acting this great Designe; that so their Commendations make provoke us, when we have the like occasion, to follow their example. But on the contrary, they bemoane the backwardnesse of others, who by

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Feare or Faction, or ſome other ſiniſter and perverſe affection were with-held from affording their beſt aſſiſtance againſt the common enemy; that ſo there aberations may teach us, when we have the like occaſion, to take better courſes.

And to make the deeper Impreſſion in us, they uſe not only Complaints, but Cenſures; Complaints againſt ſuch as were further off, but Cenſures againſt *Meroz* a neighbouring City in the Tribe of *Zabulon*, within the territory whereof the battell was fought. The inhabitants of which City ſtood, as it ſeemes, upon termes of Neutrality, and with more Policy then Piety, did expect the iſſue of the Warre, meaning to joyne themſelves with the Conquerers: which politicke Counſell proved fatall to them, for here are they blaſted with a fearfull curſe; a curſe that proceeds not from the malice of man, whoſe curſes for the moſt part fall ſhort of their intended marke: but from the ſentence of an *Angel*, who can never be ſo deſtitute, as to want meanes to ſee his ſentence put in execution. *Curſe ye Meroz, curſe ye bitterly the Inhabitants thereof: becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the helpe of the Lord againſt the mighty.*

Adrichom. in Deſcr. Trib. Zab

In the words obſerve two things, Firſt, the Cenſure. Secondly, the Crime. In the Cenſure, Firſt, what it is, A *Curſe*. Secondly, againſt whom it is directed, *againſt Meroz and the inhabitants thereof*. Thirdly, from whom it proceeds, from an Angel, *Curſe ye Meroz, (ſaid the Angel of the Lord) curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof*. The *Crime* whereby they incurre this *Cenſure*, is, Firſt for *not comming to the help of the Lord*. Secondly, their neglect in not comming to his help, is agravated and inforced by the redoubling of the words, and by the power or might of thoſe that came againſt him. *Becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.*

Firſt of the Cenſure: and firſt what it is. It is a grievous Cenſure, and exceeding heavie, for it is a *Curſe*, and not a ſingle Curſe, but doubled over. *Maledicite, Maledicite, Curſe ye Meroz, curſe ye the inhabitants thereof*. Doubled did I ſay? Nay, trebled, for in the latter clauſe it is not onely, *Maledicite*, but *Maledicendo Maledicite, Curſe ye Meroz, Curſe ye with curſing the inhabitants thereof*, which is a manner of ſpeech uſed by the Hebrewes,

Hebrewes, when they would ſet forth mens earneſtneſſe or their conſtancy and aſſiduity in doing any thing. *Eundo eamus, With going let us goe and pray before the* Lord; *ſay they in Zachary, Zach.* 8. 21. that is, goe we diligently and frequently. *Benedicendo benedixit vobis*, ſaith the Lord of *Balaam. Ioſ.* 24. 10. *With bleſſing he bleſſed you*, that is, he bleſſed you ſeriouſly, and often over. And *Ier.* 22. 10. *Flendo flete propter abeuntem, Weep ye with weeping for him that goeth away*, That is, Ceaſe not to weep, weep ſore. So here, *Maledicendo maledicite*, Curſe yee them with curſing, That is, curſe and ſpare not, give not over curſing, curſe them ſore, curſe them bitterly.

But may curſes then, ſuch bitter curſes be uſed by us, is not the Angel who bids us curſe, himſelfe liable to that curſe which *Gal.* 1. 8 is denounced even againſt an *Angel from heaven, who preacheth any thing which is repugnant to that which the Apoſtle preached?* now the *Apoſtle* exhorts, that *firſt of all prayers and ſupplications be made for all*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. and *Rom.* 12. 14. Hee chargeth us that *we bleſſe and curſe not.* So between his preaching and the Angels here, there ſeemes to be but ill correſpondencie. Yes, the faces of the Cherubims are not averſe one from another; the Apoſtle ſpeakes of voluntary vindictive Curſes, which we are apt to caſt forth againſt every one that a little thwarts our humour, and which aime not chiefly at Gods glory and the common good, but at the wreaking of our ſpite, and at private revenge, ſuch curſes we may by no meanes uſe. But the Angel ſpeakes of thoſe that are in a manner involuntary, being extorted from us by the weight of foule and exorbitant crimes, which out of our zeale to juſtice and equity, and to the preſervation of publicke peace, we cannot but wiſh ſeverely and exemplarily puniſhed. Such curſes the Angel will warrant us to caſt forth ſometimes, yet ſo as the Mariners caſt forth *Ionas*, not without great ſorrow and reluctancy; and againſt thoſe onely whoſe enormities, like *Ionah's* diſobedience, are like to bring a grievous ſtorme upon us, a ſtorme which can hardly be diverted but with their deſtruction that ſtirre it up. *Firſt of all let prayers and ſupplications be made for all*, Saith the Apoſtle in the place afore mentioned. Firſt of all let this be done, for it ſhould be the prime of our deſires, that the cur-

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sent of Gods grace may flow freely, that the streames of his goodnesse may be derived unto all people, and all persons: but if men through their obstinacie and impenitencie will not suffer *his Kingdome to come*, then secondarily and by consequent, we are to pray that *his will may be done*, if not by them, yet upon them.

The same Apostle who bids us *pray for all men*, in another place commands us to *doe good to all men*, *Gal.* 6. 10. Yet as this very precept of doing good to all, bindes us no doe harme to those who are enemies to the common good of all; so in like manner, the precept of praying for all, layeth an oblation upon us to pray against those who hinder the effect of our prayers for all, who obstinately hinder that universall happinesse which we all pray for.

And therefore, not only the best men, (for the best actions of the best men may perhaps have some relish of humane frailtie) but an *Angel* here, yea, and *Christ* himselfe sometime reached forth this cup, the cup of malediction unto the Scribes and Pharisees that maliciously set themselves against him, *Luke* 11. 43. may the Serpent, the Ringleader of all Rebellion drew a curse from the mouth of God himselfe, *Gen.* 3. 14.

Scrupulous then we need not be, so as straight way to condemne all cursing; yet ought we to be exceeding cautelous in using it onely against such persons, and in such cases, as God and his Angel have marked out unto us. Such may the persons be, and such the cause they maintaine, that in doing them harm we shall doe good, and sure then in wishing them harme wee shall doe no ill. Such may the persons be, and such the cause they maintaine, that we may lawfully fight against them in the Field, and then sure it will be no sinne to pray against them in the Church. Kill them we may in some cases; and if so, then sure we may Curse them with a safe Conscience.

Come we therefore unto the next Circumstance, unto those against whom the Curse is directed, *Meroz, and the Inhabitants thereof*. Neither the City nor the inhabitants of the City are exempted. *Curse ye Meroz*: Let her gates be burnt with fire, and her walls lie levell with the ground, and bryars grow in her streets, and her houses become a heape of rubbish. *And curse*

ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof. As they preferred their Policies before the providence of the most high God, so never may his providence stretch her wings over them. Let horrour and amazement take hold on them, and keep them in a perpetuall Alarme. Let the Angel under whose Auspicious conduct they refused to fight the Lords battels, let him stand in their way, and fight against them in all that ever they take in hand. Their Estates which they would not hazard against the common Enemy, let them bequite exhausted when they have most need of them. Their Sons and their Daughters that were the joy of their hearts, let them be cut off in the flower of their dayes; And the Wives of their bosomes, let them be given into the bosomes of those that hate them. And when they have seen all this, and a world of misery more then all this, let their last end be like the rest, let them goe downe to the grave with a tragicke and disastrous death. *Curse ye Meroz*, let a fearfull desolation fall upon it; *and Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof*, let a fearfull destruction fall on them, since they refuse to joyne with God in a just warre, may none of them live or dye in peace.

But you will perhaps say, *Vtcunque malè meriti Merozitæ, quidtamen mali mernis Merozum? However the inhabitants of Meroz had deserved ill, yet what evill had their habitations done? they were not guilty of the peoples fault, and why then are they involved in the same Curse with them?* Indeed true it is, these inanimate creatures are not obnoxious to any sinne, and consequently not to any punishment; wee are therefore to know, that the Curse which overtakes them, is not a punishment unto them, not to them, but to those that use them. For the sinnes of men are they cursed, and not to themselves, but to the men whose they are is their curse penall. *Maledicta esto terra propter te, said the Lord to Adam. Gen.* 3. 17. *Cursed be the ground for thy sake.* For thy sake it is cursed, and by the curse of it art thou punished. The evill that befalls it, is indeed an impression contrary to that perfection of nature wherein it was created, but the evill that befalls thee by it, this is an impression which properly puts on the nature of a punishment; for in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the dayes of thy life. In like

like manner the curſe of *Meroz*, the deſolation that came upon her walls, and her houſes, and all her ſtately ſtructures, was no puniſhment at all to the ſtones and timber, (they were incapable either of good or evill, and ſo incapable of reward or puniſhment.) But this deſolation of the City was a penalty inflicted upon the inhabitants, who by their treachery and ungracious policy thought to preſerve their City in a flouriſhing eſtate, whatſoever became of the reſt of the Cities round about them. The ſtones and the timber were altogether inſenſible and incapable of woe, yet their ruines both augmented the griefe, and aggravated the crime of the inhabitants. *The ſtone cryed out of the wall, and the beame out of the timber made anſwer to it* with an horrid Echo, *Woe to him that builds a towne with blood, & ſtabliſheth a City with iniquity*, as it is, *Hab.* 2. 11, 12. Inaſmuch as they thought to ſecure their City by refuſing to come and help their brethren againſt thoſe that ſought to ſpill their blood, they did as much as in them lay, to build their Town with their brethrens blood, and to ſtabliſh their City with foule perfidiouſneſſe; and ſo they and their City thrive accordingly.

Thus Townes and Cities are accurſed for the iniquities of thoſe that dwell in them. Our ſins have an unhappy influence upon all things that have any neere relation to us. For our crimes, *the whole creature is made ſubject unto vanity; and not onely unto vanity, but unto the bondage of corruption*. *Rom.* 8. 21. For the ſinne of *Adam* the earth was curſed to bring forth thornes and thiſtles. For the ſinne of *Sodome* that goodly Tract of the plaine Countrey, which for fruitfulneſſe and wholeſomeneſſe, and ſweetneſſe, and delicacie, is ſaid to have beene as the Garden of God, became a noyſome ſinke of ſulfurous waters. For the ſinne of *Pharaoh* and his obdurate malice, the Land, and Water, and Aire of *Egypt* were all infected. And for the ſinne of the Citizens of *Meroz*, *Meroz* and all her faire buildings are tumbled downe from the top of the hill whereon they ſtood, & intombed in the aſhes of their former greatnes.

And very fitly are theſe two joyned together, *Meroz and the inhabitants thereof* both joyned together in the ſame curſe. For through their neglect in not comming *to the help of the Lord*,

through their connivency in not helping to repreſſe the common enemy, both their neighbouring Cities were laid waſt, and the inhabitants of them miſerably deſtroyed. Theſe are the two maine calamities of Warre, Deſolation of Townes, and Deſtruction of men: with theſe two *Iacob* at his death charged *Simeon* and *Levi*, *Interfecerunt virum, & ſuffoderunt murum, in their wrath they ſlew a man, and in their fury they digged downe a wall, Gen. 49. 6.* They therefore that ſought not to prevent this, they that ſought not to ſave their neighbours walls, and their neighbours lives, neither of both ſhall they ſave to themſelves. The *Curſe of* God ſhall digge downe their City walls, and the ſame *Curſe* ſhall overtake the men, and never leave them, untill it leave not a man of them upon the face of the earth. *Curſe ye* Meroz, *Curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof.*

The third thing to be conſidered in the Cenſure, Is by whoſe authority it came forth; by the authority of an *Angel. Curſe ye* Meroz (*ſaid the Angel of the Lord.*) What *Angel* was this thinke we? we heare no mention of him before. and how comes he now upon the Stage, *Tanquam Deus è Machinâ, to curſe* Meroz *and the inhabitants thereof?* Truly though he be not mentioned before this, yet we are to know that he was a principall Actour in the whole buſineſſe. For though *Angels* appeare but ſeldome in viſible ſhapes, yet when good men are ingaged in the maintenance of good cauſes, the good *Angels* are ever ready to aſſiſt them; by giving them directions what to doe; by cheering their hearts, and ſtrengthening their hands with their ſupernall influences; by diverting or defeating the deſignes of the evill Spirits that oppoſe them, and of their enemies that are impelled by their inſtinct; ſometimes caſting ſome ſudden impreſſion of terrour in their minds; and ſometimes caſting ſome ſtrong impediment in their way, ſo that in concluſion, they faile of ſucceſſe, when it ſeemes to have caſt it ſelfe into their armes.

Abulenſ. in hunc locum. I conceive it therefore very likely, (and I have *Abulenſis* for mine Author) that the Angel here ſpoken of, was he that next under *God* had the guidance and government of this great *Deſigne* which *Deborah* and *Barak* undertooke; the great

great *Generalissimo* of these heavenly *Souldiers* that fought in their quarrell against *Sisera*. So comming himselfe from heaven with an Auxiliarie band to help *God* and his *Church*, had he not reason to censure Gods owne people that were so slow and stupid in their owne cause? Having Commission to leade the Armies of the living God against a mighty adversary, no marvell if he had Commission to curse these that refused to fight under his Banners.

And this addeth so great a weight unto the Curse, That it is no wonder if it drowned *Merox* in the depth of misery. For first, the curses of men are for the most part causeless curses, and so come not upon those whom they aime to hurt: but the Angels are pure and holy Spirits, never transported with any rash fury to Curse the meanest of their fellow-servants without cause And if the Curse be not a causeless Curse, there is cause to feare it, when the most contemptible spark that flies abroad meets with store of combustible stuffe, God knoweth how dangerous it may prove.

Secondly, though private men out of their zeale to Justice and to Gods Glory, may sometimes curse great offenders, and that without any breach of charity, (for we suppose that curses have their latitude; we may wish a man great harme, and yet be tenderly compassionate of his eternall welfare. Every Imprecation is not an Execration; every Curse is not an *Anathema Maran-atha*, to cut off the soule absolutely from God; nor have we any assurance that the Inhabitants of *Merox* were inevitably intralled to such a desperate condition as soone as this Curse was denounced against them.) Yet private mens curses are but light in comparison of theirs that are in authority over us. *Procul à Iove, procul a Fulmine*, it is an old saying, and holdeth here; the further men are from having under God any place of Eminency or Authority, the lesse are the Thunderbolts of their curses to be feared: But the curse of *Noah*, the curse of a Father against his wicked Son; the curse of *Moses*, the curse of a just and moderate Governour against a crew of Rebells, such curses often prove Thunderbolts indeed: and the higher the hand is that throweth them, the greater is the certainty and force too wherewith they fall. So the Angels

Gen. 9. 25.
Num. 16. 15

curse, whose authority under God was the highest, was in this respect the likeliest to take effect. For to make us reverence those that are in authority, the Lord sometimes honours them, as he did *Elias*, makes them Arbiters both of Dew and Drought: both the dew of Blessing, and the drought of Cursing, are more commonly ratified in their mouthes, then in theirs that otherwise for sanctity of life, and depth of judgement goe beyond them.

1 Kin. 17. 1.

Thirdly, the Angels, we know, are exceedingly devoted unto Mankind, they *take great joy* in the Conversion, and so cannot chuse but take great griefe in the Malediction of *a sinner*. Now no Curse is so grievous as that which comes from a deare Friend: Miserable men are we, when our Demerits draw a curse upon us from their lips, from whose eyes the very cursing of us drawes teares.

Luke 15. 10.

Fourthly, they are oft-times cursing who are themselves guilty of the same crimes for which they curse others, and then I know not how, but the Curse loseth much of it's full weight. *Qui maledicit & male agit, male agendo vim male dicti sonis frangit.* He that curseth others, and yet doth as they doe, his courses are so contrary to his Curses, that they cannot chuse but much weaken them. But here the Angel himselfe doth that, for the neglect whereof he curseth others; he himselfe came from heaven to the help of the Lord, and had done that which he came for, before he cursed those that refused to come and joyn with him; so the sinewes of his arme were no way shrunke, so as to break the strength of his owne stroke. Here was no guilt like Birdlime on his fingers, to make the curse stick fast and flutter there, and so hinder it from flying whither it was directed.

Fifthly, weakenesse is commonly most apt to curse, the lesse strength men have to wreake their wrath upon their adversaries, the more easily are they drawne to set upon them with imprecations; with imprecations, which being but empty cracks and of little force, are as little set by. But he that curseth here is an Angel, an Angel armed with power to fight the battels of the most high God. As he hath a curse in his mouth, so he hath a sword in his hand, a flaming sword to flash vengeance in the faces of those whom he curseth: The Curse

of

of such an one is a terrible curse: The curse of such an one is as the roaring of a Lion, the messenger of death; his roaring doth but sharpen his teeth to teare them in pieces that have provoked him.

Sixthly, the Angels we know, (as their name imports) are all Messengers, the Messengers of God. So the message they bring, whether it be blessing, or whether it be cursing, it comes from God. God blesseth, where they blesse; and God curseth where they curse; for they doe neither, but as he directs them. Now Gods curses are not like mans, not meerly vosive as his are, but operative. Doth he curse, and shall his curse take no effect? Yes, when our Lord cursed the Fig-tree, it never bare fruit more, but withered away instantly, (to use the words of a curse which have been cursedly used of late times) *Root and Branch*, So being cursed by him, being blasted with the breath of his Malediction for our finall fruitlessnesse, needs must we be in a wofull case; like that withered tree; The fatnesse of the earth from beneath, and the dew of heaven from above withdrawne from us; no sap to nourish us within, not so much as a leafe to shadow or shelter us without: nothing left us but (that which is worse then nothing) the axe to cut us downe, and the fire to consume us. So intollerable a thing is the Curse of God, and where his Angell curseth, he ever goeth along with him, he alwayes ratifies his Angels curse, and makes it good. *Mat.* 21. *Mal.* 4. 2

So great cause is there that the Angels curse should make a deep impression in their mindes who are guilty of the Crime here mentioned. But such as practise the contrary vertues, such as readily and cheerfully give their best assistance to such causes as the Lord approves, they have cause to rejoyce in it. For Angels stand in the field with them, the Angels fight in their quarrell: and as they curse their enemies that come against them, so they protect their persons, and keep them safe and sound from all the dangers they are ingaged in. Now many things there are in the Angels, which, if duely considered, will indeare Gods goodnesse and his mercy toward us, in making his Angels spread their wings over us, and fight for us against our enemies. First, their Power, which is so great, that one of them *in one night slew in the Camp of Sennacherib, an hundred and fourescore* *Isa.* 37. 36.

fourescore and five thousand men. Secondly, their Wisdome which is so excellent, that the woman of Tekoah striving to set forth *David's* wisdome, compares it to the wisdome of an
2 *Sam.* 14. 20. Angel, *My Lord the King is wise as an Angel of God.* Thirdly, their love and affection unto Mankind, which is so ardent, that
Luke 15. 10. they rejoyce exceedingly *over one sinner that repents*; rejoyce like the poore woman, that called her friends together to make merry with her, when she had found her piece of silver that was lost. Fourthly, the Simplicity of their substance, which makes them move unto our succour when wee are in any distresse, with incredible celerity; and gives them easie accesse into the closest dungeons to comfort and deliver those that lie
Act. 12. 6. there; as the Angel did Saint *Peter*, when he was in close prison. Fifthly, their Number, for though one Angel onely be mentioned here, yet this one was the leader of many moe;
Psal. 34. 7. as in that of the *Psalme*, *Angelus Domini castrametatur*, *The Angel of the Lord incampes round about them*, Which cannot well be understood of one single Angel; But the *Psalmist* speaking of a military action, speakes in a military Dialect, referring that to him who commands in chiefe, which is indeed
Iob 25. 3. acted by the whole Army. *Nunquid est numerus militum ejus*, *Is there any number of his Armies*, saith *Bildad*. *Thousands ministred unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before*
Dan. 7. 10. *him*, saith *Daniel*. And though so many stand before him, yet are there great numbers that goe forth from him, and oft-times about the same businesse. Great was the number of the *Syrians* that incompassed the City wherein *Elisha* was, yet so many Legions of Angels were sent to assist him, that he assures his
2 *King.* 6. 16, 17. servant, *There were moe with them then with their enemies*, and made him see it with his eyes.

Which may serve us for Incouragement, and for Caution. First, to incourage such as feare God, and feare not to help him at all assayes. So carefull is he of their safety, that he honours them, as he doth himselfe, with a guard of Angels, as the *Angels stand round about his Throne*, Rev. 5. 11. *So they incampe round about them that feare him.* Psal. 34. 7. So as long as you stand in a good Cause, stand with an invincible resolution. Care
Psal. 83. not for *Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek*, and all their Covenants

nants and Confederacies; care not for them all that *have cast their heads together, to root us out that we be no more a People, and to take to themselves the houses of our God in Possession.* For as it is there in the Psalme, *God shall doe unto them as unto the* Madianites, *unto* Sisera, *and unto* Jabin *at the Brooke of* Kison. How he did unto *Sisera* we finde here; His Angel charged him with an Host from Heaven, and charged them with a grievous *Curse* that discharged not their duty in charging with him. And God and his Angels are still the same against such as wrastle in a wicked Cause, how deep soever their Plot be layd, and how farre soever their Faction spread, yet the Angels *Curse* will meet with them, and all that favour them, in due time. And then an end of all their vast aspirings, and an end also of all their vain hopes, who trusted in the shadow of that Tree, to whose Root Vengeance, when it was first Planted, layd her Axe.

2. Since the Angels stand with us against our Enemies, It behooveth us to be cautelous in avoyding all things that may breake off our society with these blessed Spirits. God it is that sends them to assist us. First therefore indeavour we to reconcile our selves unto him by sincere repentance, and then take we heed how we doe any thing which may make the Angels turne away their Faces. They are Spirituall Substances, altogether unacquainted with sensuall pleasures. Grieve them not therefore with surfetting and drunkennesse, or lasciviousnesse. They rejoyce in the Repentance of a sinner, Grieve them not therefore by your Impenitency; Grieve them not by rejoycing at (that which makes the Devill and his Angels merry) the Infirmities and Falls of your Brethren. They Delight to be present in the House of Prayer, as Saint *Paul* intimates 1 *Cor.* 11. 10. Grieve them not therefore by absenting your selves from such places, or by your unreverent carriage when you are there. They Delight much in Hospitality, as the Apostle gives us to understand, *Heb.* 13. 2. Grieve them not therefore by your Inhospitable carriage unto poore Strangers that are in misery. They are disposed as an Army, one in Order and Degree above another, for we Reade not onely of Angels, but of an *Archangel* 1 *Thes.* 4 16. and *Dan.* 10. 13. One of them is Instiled, *Vnus ex Principibus Primariis, One of the Chiefe Princes.* Grieve them not therefore by affecting a Parity either in Church

or State, which once brought in, will undoubtedly bring in Anarchy and Confusion with it. The Adversaries of our Church-Government in one of their Printed Papers, call us *to Look unto the Patterne in the Mount*, and to conforme our selves to what we see there; If they meane *Mount Sion* where the Temple stood, sure I am, the Pattern we find there, is nothing like their Platformes; For there were, First the *Levites*, and then the *Priests* above them, and lastly, the *Chiefe-Priest* over all. But if the *Mount* we are to Look at be yet higher, if it be Heaven they meane, which is the *Mountain of Gods Holinesse*, there also we finde a *Patterne* which will not please their humours. There we find the *Angels* Marshalled together in a most Heavenly Hierarchy; Some being Superiours, and some Subordinate; yet without any impairement or diminution of that happinesse which they all enjoy. Thus is it among the *Angels*. And since the Ministers of the Gospel are called *Angels*, why should they disdaine to order themselves by that *Patterne* which the *Angels* set them, and which all Churches throughout all Ages every where observed, till fifteene hundred Yeares after the Birth of Christ were turned over? God himselfe hath shewed his liking of this *Angelicall Order*, by sending his Angels to blesse this Church, which hath constantly observed it, above any other Church which the Sunne hath shined on in these latter times. And if these Heavenly Watchmen have now suffered an Enemy to break in and disturbe our Peace; we may remember it was not thus with us, untill this Order was first disturbed by tumultuous Practises, and the disturbers of it by some applauded, by many countenanced, and by the most but faintly opposed. Indeed of late some Diviners have risen up, who dare promise us more prosperous Times then ever, were this Order taken quite away: But whether we should beleeve their predictions, of whose Prophetical Spirit we have small assurance; or God himselfe speaking from Heaven by the experience of full fourescore Yeares, let any indifferent Man judge. As for the Platformes which these new Projectors would put upon us; no *Patterne* can they finde for them either in Heaven or in Earth, before these last and worst Times; when their Authours drew them out, not by any *Patterne* they had seen before, or ever heard of, but according to the *Idea* which themselves had Forged in their owne

Rev. 2.

own Fancies. Grieve not then the *Angels* by preferring ſuch Diſciplinarian Dreames before the Order which the *Angels* themſelves follow. Laſtly, ſince the Angels are preſent with every one of us, when we are moſt of all retired from other Company; offer them not ſo great a grievance, as to doe that wickedneſſe before their Faces, which we durſt not doe in the preſence of ſome mortall Man. For theſe and the like, are *Gravamina Angelorum*, Grievances whereby we ſet the Angels away from us, and make them powre forth the Vialls of their Imprecations, not upon our Enemies, but upon our ſelves.

So we have done with the Cenſure, and come now unto the Crime, *Becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord.* Where two things are to be explained. 1. What *the help of the Lord* meaneth. 2. How we are to help him.

For the firſt, *The help of the Lord* ſeemes ſomewhat a ſtrange Speech. For doth the Lord ſtand in need of Mans help? No he can have, and he can doe whatſoever he will without any help from us at all. Yet many things there are which he will not doe without our help: many things there are wherein he requireth that we ſhould be Fellow-workers, and Fellow-helpers with him: Not for any need he hath of us, but that he delights to ſee us employed in theſe Actions that are holy and juſt, and hereby alſo takes occaſion to Crown us with a Recompence of Reward.

The help then and aſſiſtance we are to give unto the Lord, conſiſts in uſing the meanes which he hath appointed for the preventing of danger. Yet ſince God himſelfe is *out of the reach of any danger*, how can we any way help him? Indeed God himſelfe is in himſelfe eternally All-ſufficient, ſo infinitely and immutably happy, that nothing in this World can either better his Eſtate, or make it worſe. Yet ſundry things there are in this World, which he hath tied unto himſelfe in ſo ſtrait a knot, that whether we help, or refuſe to help them, we help or refuſe to help the Lord himſelfe.

Such are firſt of all Kings and Princes, and Supreme Magiſtrates, whom God hath linked unto himſelfe in a moſt ſpeciall and immediate tie. For *he finds them out and chuſes them*, Pſal. 89. 20. *He it is that Anoynts them*, Pſal. 105. 15. *He ſets their*

Crown upon their Heads, Pſal. 21. 3. The Ceremony may be performed by mortall Men, but the Power is derived from God alone, *For there is no Power but of God*, Rom. 13. 1. No Power but it comes from God, either mediately, as to inferiour Magiſtrates; or immediately, as to Kings, on whoſe heads the Lord powres the whole box of Ointment, the ſtreames whereof are from them diffuſed unto all that beare Rule under them. The Waters of Government ſpring not out of the Earth, but drop downe from Heaven, and ſo, as in Monarchies, Kings are the Ciſterns wherein they are firſt received, and from whom by ſeverall Conduits, as they and their lawes thinke fit to diſpenſe them, they are derived to others, *Inde ille Poteſtas, unde Spiritus*, ſaith *Tertullian*, no Court-Paraſite, I dare ſay for him; *Thence have they their Power, whence they have their Spirits*. And I hope they have their Spitits immediately from God. From God have they their Regall Power, and for God, or in his ſtead doe they ſtand. His Roome they ſupply, in his Seat doe they ſit, and his Perſon they repreſent. *Ego dixi, Dij eſtis, I have ſaid, ye are Gods*. God hath ſaid it, and we may ſafely ſay it after him. Gods they are by *Deputation*, Gods they are by *Repreſentation*, Gods by *Lievtenancie*, and *Vicegerancie*. The Heathen Poët agrees with Scripture in this point: whoſe words will loſe much of their elegancy, but nothing of their true ſenſe and meaning, being thus Engliſhed.

Tertullian. in Apologet.

Pſal. 82. 6.

Callimach. in Hymno Iovis.

From God are Kings, for nothing more Divine
Then Kings, to whom God doth his Place aſſigne.

So the wrongs done to Kings fly in the face of Heaven, and through their ſides wound God himſelfe. When they by Seditions or Inſurrections are brought into any ſtraits, God himſelfe ſuffers with them. God ſuffers with them, and they that ſuffer them to ſuffer, they that refuſe to help them, they refuſe to help the living God, and ſo ſhall want his help, when they have moſt need of it. Thus much is evident out of my Text here where becauſe *Deborah* and *Barak* were the Lievtenants of the Lord, therefore ſnch as came not to help them, are curſed by the Angel, for *not comming to the help of the Lord*.

Secondly, as Princes, ſo after them and under them, Prieſts and Prophets are indeared unto God in ſo neere a relation that when

when we help them, we help God; and refuſing to help them, we refuſe in like manner to help him. Of Princes it is ſaid, *Touch not mine Anointed.* And of Paſtors it is ſaid in the very next Words of the ſame Verſe, *Doe my Prophets no harme.* Pſal. 105. 15. Of Princes it is ſaid, *He that Reſiſteth them, Reſiſteth Gods Ordinance,* Rom. 13. 2. And of Paſtors, it is ſaid by the Sonne of God, *He that deſpiſeth you deſpiſeth me, and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me,* Luk. 10. 16. *Moſes* tells *Corah* and his Crew, That what they did againſt *Aaron*, they did it againſt God himſelfe; *Ye are all gathered together againſt the Lord, and what is* Aaron *that ye murmure againſt him?* Num. 16. 11. And if they that are gathered together againſt *Aaron*, be gathered together againſt the Lord; then they that wrong him, they wrong the Lord, and they that help him, they help the Lord, and they that may and will not come to his help, they are liable to the Angels Curſe here, for not comming to the help of the Lord. Now if we deſire to know who are now in *Aarons* Roome; *Corah* and his Complices that murmure ſo much, becauſe they are not *Aarons* Equalls, will ſoon ſhew us who they are. Or if we like not of them to be our Guides, Saint *Hierome*, a moſt unpartiall Witneſſe, will informe us truely, *Quod* Aaron, ſaith he, *& Filii ejus, atque Levita in Templo fuerunt, hoc ſibi Epiſcopi, Presbiteri, & Diaconi vendicant in Eccleſiâ*; *What* Aaron, *and his Sonnes, and the Levites were in the Temple (of the Iewes) the ſame let Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons challenge to themſelves in the (Chriſtian) Church:* So by Saint *Heroms* confeſſion, (whoſe confeſſion by the confeſſion of our Adverſaries themſelves, is much to be valued in this Point) what *Aaron* was then, Biſhops are now; and ſo they that are now gathered together againſt them, every whit as bad, every way as direct oppoſers of God, as they that were then gathered together againſt him; as direct oppoſers of God as they, and perhaps much more deſpightfull, as having uſed thoſe that ſucceed *Aaron* in a farre better Prieſthood, farre worſe then ever *Aaron* was uſed by any. For what outrages have they not uſed againſt them? With tumultuous violence have they abuſed their Perſons; With horrible ſacriledge have they ſeized their Eſtates; With unſufferable calumnies have they

Hierom. ad Evagrium.

they traduced their good names. Yet this is not all; Saint Paul who was so patient in suffering wrongs and contempts done to his Person, yet thought *no shame to magnifie his Office, and to boast of the Authority which God had given him.* But now, nether of both are spared. Not onely against the Persons, but against the Office and calling of Bishops have these wicked men begun to wage a desperate Warre; and so fight not onely against us, but ransacke the Graves, and disturbe the Ashes, and blast the Memories of Gods deceased Saints, all the best Christians of the best times. Armies of blessed and holy Men, who maintained the purity of the Catholike Faith, against all Heresies that crept in, and by their Writings propagated it unto Posterity: Men that spent their Lives in Prayers and Preachings, and painfull studies, and in the hardest exercises of Mortification: And having spent them thus, spent them over againe in suffering Martyrdome for the Faith of Christ; and yet all these either themselves managed this Office, or else lived and died in obedience to those that did mannage it. Yet to deale ingeniously, I find some Bishops condemned in Scripture, marshalled together in the same verse with *Murtherers and Theeves, and evill doers,* 1 Pet. 4. 15. But these are *allotriepiskopoi*, as Saint *Peter* termes them in that place, such as busie themselves to play the Bishops in other mens Dioceses where they have nought to doe. And none more guilty of this then they that most of all cry out against lawfull Bishops. None more ready not onely to raise tumults at their owne home, but to rove abroad, as farre perhaps as the Bowells of a Forraigne Kingdom, and there take upon them farre more then Episcopall power, power to reforme Religion by the Sword, where they have not the least shadow of any just Authority, then they that are professed and sworne Enemies to the Episcopall Calling and Iurisdiction. So we passe not a jot, if these men passe among these with whom Saint *Peter* sorts them, among *Murtherers, and Theeves, and evill doers.* But as for the Fathers of the Families into which these Theeves have broken; as for the Venerable Calling of Bishops, which these Murtherers and Malefacters without any Calling at all presume to take away, it is a Calling warranted by the Analogy of that Order which God estab-

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shed among the Priests of the Old Testament, and by that Imparity which the Sonne of God established between the twelve Apostles, and seventy two Disciples, whom he appointed to be Ministers of the New. A Calling confirmed by him after his Ascention into Heaven, when he Wrote *to the seven* Angels *of the seven Churches*, Rev. 2. A Calling executed by the Apostles themselves, and Apostolicall men at their appointment; approved and highly revereneed by the noble Armies of Ancient Councells, and Ancient Fathers; and Universally received in all Churches all the World over, from the time that Christianity was first setled, untill this last Age: When these Mens Masters by force indeed suppressed it in some places, and on the ruines of it planted these Principles, that without Gods gracious and speedy help, will be the ruine of us all, and all our Children, and will draw the blood of Reformed Churches, as long as any of them draw breath. In this case if we refuse to put to our helping hand, we are shamefully guilty of *not comming to the helpe of the Lord*, and have cause to expect the Angels Curse. Bishops in the *Revelation* are by our Saviour called, The *Angels of the Churches*. And no marvell if the Angels of Heaven Curse them, by whom the Angels of the Churches are deserted.

Thirdly, They help or refuse to help the Lord, that help or refuse to help the People of the Lord, when they are in any danger or distresse. For Gods People are not as other People: They are *Sars hereditatis*, *The Lot of his Inheritance*. They are *Populus acquisitionis*, *A People purchased* at an high rate. They are *Laos perionsios*, *His peculiar People*; *all that devoure them, are Offenders*; *all that touch them, they touch the apple of his own Eye*. And how Gods People in this Land have beene touched of late, I think we are all very sensible, touched and touched to the quick by those, that being but their Proctors, have made themselves perpetuall Dictators over them, and invaded all that was any way precious or deare unto them. Invaded their Propriety by Arbitrary Impositions, and open Violence. Invaded their Liberty by burying them alive in perpetuall Imprisonment. Invaded their Persons with hostile armes, shedding their blood like Water, and delivering some of them

Deut. 32.9.
1 *Pet.* 2. 9.
Deut. 14. 2.
Ierem. 2. 3.
Zach. 2. 8.

of

of no meane quality *in manum Carnificis*, to die like Traitours on the fatall Tree, for no other fault, but because they shewed themselves loyall Subjects unto their Liege Lord. Invaded their most ancient and common Patrimony, the Law of the the Land, taking upon them an ill-becomming Majesty to make new Lawes, or (as they call them) new Ordinances, which all must obey, or else be proscribed to the extreamest Penalties; to suppresse some known Lawes, and to suspend all execution of them; and to invassall all the rest to their Interpretations with such a Papall Peremptorinesse, that what they have once Voted for Law, none may afterward presume to question it. Lastly, invaded the liberty of their Consciences, which themselves were wont to plead for with such pangs of compassion, in favour of those who either could not or would not be satisfied with some things which the Law required: yet now in many places where they have Power, the tenderest Consciences are not permitted either to serve God with such Service, or to Baptize their children with such Rites, or to bury their Dead with such Solemnities, as the Lawes which stand (or at least should stand) in full force precisely enjoyne. Nor know I whether to bemoane the People of this Land more in respect of these and many other miseries which they now endure, or in respect of the felicity they have lost. Lost it, when they were now ready to take possession of it. Lost it I say by their meanes who needlesly imbroyled them in this unnaturall Warre, when the Royall heart of our Gracious Soveraigne was so bent to relieve all their just grievances, and give full satisfaction to all their moderate and loyall desires, and had given such Demonstrations and reall Pledges of these his Princely intentions, as we cannot but wonder they had no better influence upon these mens untoward Dispositions. If we help not the poore people of the Lord against such as have deprived them of so much happinesse, and actually plunged them in so many Miseries, we make our selves guilty *of not comming to the help of the Lord*, and so are involved in this Curse which the Angel denounceth against *Meroz and the Inhabitants thereof*.

Fourthly, they help the Lord that help to vindicate the Truth. For all Truth howsoever apprehended, whether by Sense or Reason,

Reason, or by Faith, is moſt precious and deare unto Almighty God, as being a beame diffuſed from the *Father of lights*, and which hath ever inſtampt upon it ſome Character or reſemblance of his Divine Perfection. God himſelfe is Truth: and ſo they that help to redeeme a captivated Truth, or to defend it when it is in hazard, they help God. And ſuch as have ability and opportunity to doe this, and doe it not, they refuſe to come to his help. Now Truth is oft-times indangered and oppreſſed as well by force of Armes, as by force of Arguments. We ſee this at this day in the *Turkiſh* Empire, where the Truth of Chriſt would ſoone breake forth, did not the Sword of *Mahomet* beat it downe. Indeed Truth, I doubt not, hath many Champions, all on all hands pretend to fight in her quarrell: Yet (not to ſpeake of the tares of Anabaptiſme which in many ſoyles comes up ſo faſt) thus much, I hope, I may ſafely ſay, If the Papiſts, and among them the Jeſuites be enemies to the Truth, then they that forſake their Brethren of the Reformed Churches to ſhake hands with them, are ſure none of the faſteſt friends to it. That Chriſtian Kings within their owne Dominions have a Supreme Power derived immediately from God. That this Power extends over all Perſons and to all Cauſes as well Eccleſiaſticall as Civill. That in this Power is contained a Power to call Aſſemblies of what kind ſoever, and to diſſolve them, and to confirme the Acts and Decrees that are made in them, without which Confirmation they are of no validity. That from this Power all Power of uſing the Sword ought to be deriverd, ſo that none may draw it without, and much more againſt the expreſſe Command of the Supreme Magiſtrate, but he draweth Damnation upon his owne ſoule, as Saint *Paul* tells us, *Rom.* 13. 2. Theſe are Truthes which the Worthies of this and other Reformed Churches have made good againſt all the oppoſition of the Papiſts. Yet are the contrary Untruthes and many moe then theſe, which I have now no leaſure to inſiſt on, not onely received, but ſtubbornly maintained by the Ringleaders of the Rebellion now on foot. For howſoever theſe men talke much againſt Popery, yet they that have read their ſeditious Pamphlets can eaſily trace them to the Jeſuits Cells; from whoſe Magazines they have borrowed all their beſt wea-

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pons, and have shamefully revolted to that Cause, in defiance whereof they would faine seeme to simple men to have displayed their Banners. But that which once was Truth, is so still, and ever will be, and what we have thus long held for Truth against the Jesuits, let us not suffer any other Faction to wrest it from us, but assert it against them both with all the good means that God hath given us. Otherwise wee abandon the God of Truth, and provoke him to abandon us to the Angels Curse, for *not comming to the help of the Lord.*

Fifthly, They helpe the Lord, that helpe to preserve the things which have his name called upon them, and are his by speciall Appropriation; to preserve, I say, and keep them in such a due Discriminative regard; as becomes the Relation they have to him. Whatsoever they be, whether times, or places, or things, that are set a part to Gods speciall service, they are said in Scripture to have *his Name called upon them*, that is, to be his, after a speciall and peculiar manner; so his, as they are no longer ours; so his, that if we expose them to a promiscuous and common usage, we profane his Name which is called upon them. Our Saviour thought his Fathers Name profaned, when *a common Vessell was but carried through the House* which had his Fathers Name called upon it. Yet was not this abuse done in the Courts of the Temple which had any legall Sanctity, but in the outermost Court, where the Gentiles were admitted to pray unto God and which the Jewes themselves accounted Common and Prophane. But though it had indeed no legall Sanctity, yet being a place appointed for the Gentiles to serve God in, our Lord layeth claime to it, and challengeth it to be a part of his Fathers House, and so his Fathers Name to be profaned when any common action was done in it.

Marke 11. 5, 16.

But now the fences are throwne downe, and whatsoever the Pietie of former times accounted Holy, is laid common. Profanation hath not onely gotten it selfe Patrons to plead for it at the Barre, but Champions to fight for it in the Field. These sacred Times which the Christian Church from her first infancy set apart to be Memorialls of the great Mysteries of mans Redemption, of the Nativity, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our blessed Saviour, these and others quite taken away,

and

and raſed out of the Kalendar of our new Reformers. Theſe ſacred Places that are dedicated to the exerciſe of Divine Worſhip, and ſo made the Houſes of the Living God, ſome of them miſerably defaced, *and all their curious carved works broken downe with axes and with hammers*; others robbed and plundered, and left ſo naked, that a Man who ſeeth it would almoſt ſweare that the Owner of the Houſe were by theſe men taken for their ſworne enemy. That ſacred Portion of Church-revenues, the poore Remainders of our Forefathers Devotion, which the Ancients were wont to call, *The Dowrie of the Spouſe of Chriſt*, by Sacrilegious violence wreſted from her, and either privately imbezelled, or caſt as a mite into the common Treaſury, to help forward that prodigious piece of Reformation, with the newes whereof, the world hath beene ſo ſtartled theſe many yeeres. Theſe ſacred Oathes and Covenants which we ſolemnely tooke, with Religious invocation of Gods holy Name; binding our ſelves to acknowledge his Majeſty for Supreme Head and Governour of this Realme, in all Cauſes and over all Perſons; and to defend him againſt all Attempts whatſoever, whether againſt his Perſon, or his Crowne and Dignity; theſe and the like ſhamefully violated in the ſight of Heaven and of all the World, and other Oathes preſſed upon us which directly and diametrally contradict them. Laſtly, that ſacred Forme of divine Service agreed on by the Church to be offered up unto God at her publicke meetings, which the Devill and his Emiſſaries have ſo long ſifted, and were never yet able to ſay any thing againſt it to any purpoſe; That Sacred Forme of Divine Service, which hath been unto us *as Sampſons lockes, one of the principall things wherein our great ſtrength lay* a principall meanes to preſerve us ſo long in Peace and Plenty, and Proſperity, above all the Nations of the Chriſtian World; this is now profaned with odious aſperſions and ſhrewdly ſhot at with all the Engines that Hell it ſelfe hath in ſtore. In ſtead whereof we are invited to ſerve God without any Rule or Set Forme at all. The Lord muſt now be glad of ſuch Offerings as *Iephthah* once raſhly vowed to give him, *Quicquid primùm occurrit, Whatſoever comes firſt*, whatſoever comes firſt into the extemporary thoughts of every raw Enthuſiaſt. *Davids* reſolution is now

Pſal. 74. 7.

Iud. 16. 17.

Iud. 11. 31.

openly cryed downe. For *the Sacrifices that cost us nothing*, not so much as Study or Premeditation, these are the onely Sacrifices that the Altars of our God are thought worthy of. If we help not the Lord in this Exigent, what can we hope for, but that his Angel should fall upon us with a whole volley of Imprecations.

2 *Sam.* 24. 24.

So we see by this what it is to help the Lord. In the next place we are to show how we must help him. Which is the Point I should chiefly have insisted on, were I not loath to passe the limits of the time allotted me. Wee are to help the Lord with our Persons; with our Estates; with our Counsell and Advice; with our Countenance and Incouragement. We are to help the Lord and the Cause that he commends unto us, by furthering and helping them all we can that are employed in helping it; by suffering with patience the hardest pressures, rather then doe any thing which may be to the hinderance or disadvantage of it; by speaking and writing when occasion serves, in defence of it; for here in the Song among those that came to the help of the Lord, I find some *that handled the pen of the writer*. Lastly, (to omit many other wayes of helping the Cause which the Lord approves) we are to help it by our humble and hearty Prayers for the good successe of it. And we are to help it by our repentance and amendment of life, that so our Prayers may be the more prevalent. If we faile in these or any of these particulars, when it is in our power to performe them, we are duller then the senseless and liveless creatures, for they in their courses fought against the enemies of the Lord. *The starres in their courses fought against Sisera, and that ancient River, the river Kishon swept away his Hoast.* If we faile in these or any of these particulars, when it is in our power to performe them, (and much more if in stead of helping wee hinder the Lord, and help his enemies) we are no better then *Judas*, Traitours to God and his triumphant Cause, (for his Cause will in the end triumph.) And Traitours likewise to our owne peace, and to our owne soules. For the Angels Curse, unlesse we repent in time, *shall come into our bowels like water, and like oyle into our bones.*

Ind. 5. 14.

Ver. 20, 21.

Psal. 109. 17.

I shall crave leave to speake a word or two of the two last, as being

being absolutely and without exception required of all. Some may want Ability, and some Authority, and some Opportunity to doe all the rest. But all must pray to God for successe, all must repent and amend their lives, that so their Prayers may find acceptance, and prevaile with God for a blessing.

First, then we must help the Lord by praying unto him, that he would help us. As it was in the Warre against *Amalek*, the first Warre that ever Gods people undertooke; *Ioshua* fought in the field, and *Moses* prayed in the Mount. So should it be in all the Wars they are ingaged in, *Ioshua* and the Souldiers must doe their part, gird themselves with strength and courage to the battell. Yet when this is done, *Moses* must not thinke that there is nothing left for him to doe. We that stay behinde must not suppose that we have no meanes left to further the successe of this great affaire. Yes, our Prayers and Supplications will availe much. *Hæc sunt Arma Militiæ nostræ, These are the Weapons of our Warfare.* And these weapons are no childish weapons, but *mighty through God to the casting downe of strong holds.* By his prayers *Asa* defeated ten hundred thousand *Ethiopians.* By his prayers, *Iehosaphat* defeated the children of *Moab* and *Ammon*, and the inhabitants of *Mount Seir*, an innumerable Host, without a stroke stricken. By their prayers, the Christian Legion under *Marcus Aurelius* obtained the sirname of *Fulminatrix, the thundring Legion*: For by their prayers they not onely procured raine when the Army was in distresse for want of water, but Thunderbolts also to be throwne from Heaven in the faces of their foes that fought against them. These Heroicall atchievements which the Apostle ascribeth to faith, were wrought indeed by Faith, but for the most part by Faith breaking forth into fervent prayer; whereby these ancient Worthies *out of weakenesse were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the Armies of the Aliens.*

Exod. 17.11.

2 *Cor.* 10.4.

2 *Chron.* 14. 11.

2 *Chr.* 20.6.

Euseb. lib. 5. *cap.* 5.

Heb. 11.34.

So if we desire that all things may goe well with us; If we desire the Scepter may have its full sway in that Royall hand, which so long protected us in the fruition of our Livelihoods, Lawes, and Liberties. If we desire the Rod of *Aaron*, the just Authority of sacred Priesthood may againe flourish with fresh blossomes, and be so kept for ever; If we desire that Gods peo-

ple may have some breathing from their present troubles; If we desire that the Truth we have so long professed may at last prevaile against popular Clamours, that strive to overbeare it and cry it downe; If we desire that the fence or partition-wall betweene Holy things and common may not be plucked up; that sacred times, and sacred places, and sacred portions or possessions may have a select, hallowed, and distinct use; and that sacred Oathes and Bonds of Allegiance may be kept inviolate; If we desire to uphold that sacred Forme of Gods publicke Service, which hitherto hath been our *Palladium*, whereby we have obtained so many strange Deliverances, and flourished in all manner of felicity to the admiration of our neighbours round about us. If we desire this (and which of us all desires not all this?) then let us not faile to lift up our hands with *Moses in the Mount*, to lift up our hands and our hearts too, and cry mightily unto God for his aid and assistance. Though wee have not done it heretofore so carefully and so constantly as we should have done, yet now to stirre up our selves to doe it with all possible fervency and assiduity; now to band our selves together as an Army of Suppliants and besiege Heaven, and even fight with God for a blessing. When our Profits or our Pleasures, or any thing else begins to withdraw us from our Devotions, thinke how the case stands with us thinke of that great and important businesse we have now in hand, and so suffer not our selves to be withdrawne. Remember *Deborah* and *Barak*, and those that jeopard their lives with them against the common enemy in the field of bloud. And remember to help them, if with nothing else, yet by powring out our fervent supplications for them in the house of Prayer. So God shall remember both them and us with his saving goodnesse, that we may joyntly *praise him for the avenging of Israel, and for setting us up above our Adversaries.*

Secondly, we are to help the Lord, or the Cause which he commends unto us, by imposing upon our selves the severe task of true Repentance and amendment of life. As we must lift up our hands with *Moses*, so the hands we lift up must be such hands as Saint *Paul* requires; *I will that all men every where lift up pure hands.* Pure hands, purged by Repentance from the

1 Tim. 2. 8.

guilt

guilt, and by amendment of life from the ſpot of ſinne; at leaſt in ſome degree purged by our unfaigned indeavours to purge them both theſe wayes. Indeed Repentance and Amendment of life of all other times are thought moſt unſeaſonable in time of Warre. Then if ever we thinke our ſelves licenſed to powre out our ſelves unto all manner of exceſſe. *Mores & Leges ſilent inter Arma, When Armes are once taken up, both good lawes and good manners are permitted to have a writ of eaſe.* Thus ſome of us ſeeme to thinke, but if they take the matter into due conſideration, I doubt not but they will bethinke themſelves better. For alas Warre is a puniſhment, and a grievous puniſhment, which God for our ſinnes ſuffers wicked men to bring upon us; and how dare we ſhow our ſelves ſo ſtubborne, as to commit ſinne with greedineſſe, and indulgence, and an high hand at the ſame time, when God for our ſins ſuffers ſuch men to riſe up againſt us, and thereby makes our ſufferings ſo heavy? Having ſo many enemies that are ſo eagerly bent to do us miſchiefe, how dare we harbour any domeſticke enemies in our owne boſomes? For the ſins we give way unto are our domeſtick enemies, farre more dangerous and more deadly enemies, then any that incounter us in the day of battell, and diſcharge their Piſtols in our faces. For were it not for our ſinnes, our Innocency would make us more then Piſtoll-proofe. Were it not for our ſinnes, all our enemies', were they never ſo many, would never be able to doe us harme. This therefore the Lord commands us to looke unto, and eſpecially to looke unto it then, when other enemies are puſhing at us. *When thou goeſt forth with the hoſt againſt thine enemies, keepe thy ſelfe from all wickedneſſe, Deut.* 23. 9. So if we be tempted to any ſinne, conſider the time, the ſad and ſorrowfull time of Warre, and doe it not. *The Arke, and Iſrael, and Iudah abide in Tents, and my Lord Ioab, and the ſervants of my Lord are incamped in the open fields: and ſhall I then goe into mine houſe, to eat and to drinke?* 2 *Sam.* 11. 11. ſaid that good Patriot *Vriah*. At ſuch a time as this he thought fit to abridge his liberty even in lawfull things, which otherwiſe he might have uſed with a ſafe Conſcience. And ſhall we then while the Trumpet ſounds in our eares, nay while the doleſull ſhrieks of our dying Brethren, whoſe bloud is ſpilt as wa-

ger on the face of the earth, while these sound in our eares, shall we assume liberty to doe that which God abhorreth? sure I am this is not the way to help the Lord, but to hinder him: to hinder and arrest that happy successe, which hath so often crowned our honourable indeavours in helping the Lord, and his just Cause heretofore. But the Lord I trust will so rule our hearts in his Faith and Feare, that every man entring into his owne heart, and cheerfully sacrificing the lusts of his heart to the Common Good, the worke of the Lord, shall still prosper in our hands, *untill Iudgement be brought forth unto a full and perfect Victory*

There is but one thing more in the Text, and I will but touch it. It is the aggravation of the Crime here spoken of, which is inforced by the doubling of the words, and by the power or might of the enemy; *Because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.*

The words are not doubled thus for nothing, but to show us that wee must help, and help againe. A single aid, a single assistance will not serve the turne. *Meroz* is cursed because she doubled not her help. To help a little, and then sit downe and looke on, this is not enough. *Meroz* her selfe went, it may be, thus farre. But because she doubled not her help, because perhaps she gave over, and withdrew her assistance, when the enemy began to grow mighty, therefore was she involved in the Angels curse, and sunke under it; sunke not onely to Desolation but to Oblivion. For after this we find not the least whisper of her, or of any thing that any way concerned her, either in the Scriptures, or in any other Moniments of Antiquity. So if we help sparingly and weakly, we are still liable to the Angels Curse.

And if we help sparingly and weakly, our help will be to no purpose. For we are to help the Lord not against meane, but mighty Adversaries, *to help the Lord against the Mighty*, against whom faint and feeble succours will doe no good. And for this very cause the Lord suffers them to become so mighty, to try whether we will help againe and againe; to try whether wee will redouble our courage, and care, and diligence, and our zeale to contribute to the Common safety, when the *Hydra*

which

which hath been ſo often quelled, begins to riſe up againe with more heads then it had before. To try whether our reſolution will riſe accordingly; riſe like the Current of ſome mighty River, which being ſtopped in its courſe, ſwels higher, and beares all downe before it.

And thus would we help with all cheerfulneſſe, were not our minds ſo taken up with the Might of thoſe againſt whom that we conſider not to whom we are to give aſſiſtance. For it is the Lord whom we are required to help, *to help the Lord againſt the Mighty.* And ſhould wee ſpend all we have, all the water in our Ciſterne, and all the bloud in our Veines too, in helping him, it were no more then we have received from him; and nothing ſo much as he hath done for us, for what is the bloud in our veines in compariſon of that moſt precious bloud which he ſhed upon the Croſſe for our ſakes? or what are the Waters of our Ciſternes in compariſon of that Ocean of his Omnipotency and All-ſufficiency which he hath even exhauſted to doe us good? Inſomuch that he puts himſelfe in the condition of a man who in helping his friend hath ſtrained his ſtrength, and ſqueezed his fortunes to the utmoſt, and bids the World judge, whether it were poſſible for him to doe any more. *Quid amplius potui facere, What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it?* Iſa. 5. 4.

So in point of Thankfulneſſe we are bound to help the Lord againſt the mightieſt Adverſaries, and we are to doe it alſo in point of Wiſdome. For he that helpeth the Lord, helpeth himſelfe, helpeth himſelfe to a mighty and a faithfull Confederate, who will be ſure to help him when all other helps faile. Thoſe that help the Lord, the Lord never failes to help them. *And bleſſed is the man that hath the God of Iacob for his help.* Pſal. 146. 4. If he but once blow upon our mightieſt adverſaries, all their might will melt to water. Help him then as the Angel requires here: Help his Anointed, and his poore Church. Help his People againſt thoſe *Brambles*, that ſollicited them to *truſt in their ſhadow*, and now rent and teare them with the prickles of intolerable oppreſſions; help his Truth from being defiled with popular errours, and all things which are hallowed unto his Name from being ſoyled with any profane uſage; help him, as Iud. 9. 15.

it is in the Text again and againe; help him both with Temporall and Spirituall helps; help him with cheerfulneſſe and conſtancy: help him but thus, and he will ariſe and help us. And upon his riſing to help his ſervants, there followes a diſſipation
Pſal. 68. 1. of all the might of the adverſe party. *Exurgat Deus, & diſſipentur inimici.* It is a Prophecy as well as a Prayer, a Prophecy that never will be out of date, *Let God riſe* to help us, *and he will* ſoone *ſcatter* all *our enemies*; ſcatter them as the duſt before the wind; ſcatter their Counſels, and ſcatter their Companies, and ſcatter their unhallowed Combinations; ſo ſcatter them as they ſhall never unite to the diſturbance of Iſrael, as long as the World endureth. In the Auſpicious Preſage and earneſt deſire of which happineſſe I conclude. The Lord give us grace
Heb. 4. 16. ſo to help him, that we may be holpen by him, *and find grace to help us in all times of our need*; And that for the Merits and Mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. To whom with the Father and the holy Ghoſt, Three Perſons, and one God, all Glory, Power, and Praiſe be aſcribed for ever, *Amen.*

FINIS.

Errata.

Page. 3. Line 26. for *indeavour with*, read *indeavour herewith*. pag. 5. l. 3. for *there aberrations*. read *their aberrations*. pa. 7. l. 21. for *oblation*, read *obligation*. Pag. 14. li. 22. for *thousands*. read *thousand thousands*. Pag. 22 li. 27. for *deroverd*, read *derived*. & li. 34. for *received*. read *revived*.